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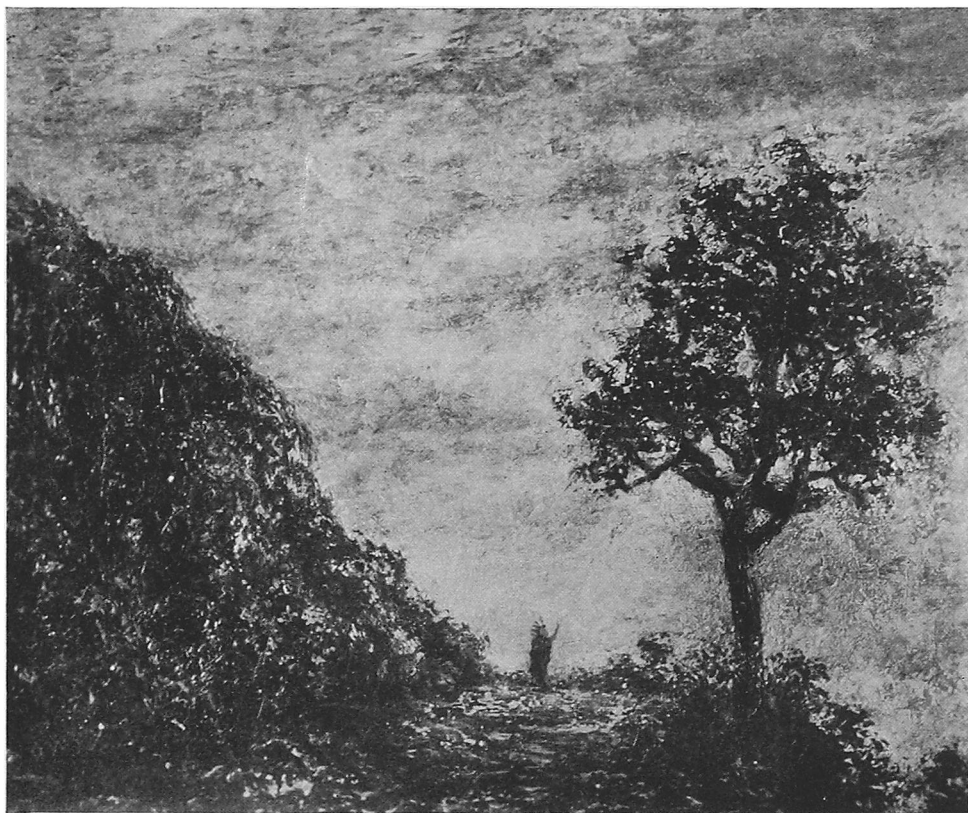
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LONE INDIAN AND SETTING SUN
By Ralph A. Blakelock

Courtesy The Anderson Galleries, New York

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Blakelock's Misfortunes to Benefit Fellow Artists

IT WOULD seem that the widely advertised sorrows of Ralph Albert Blakelock are to result in good, not only for himself, but for others who follow the oftentimes precarious profession of painting. According to a writer in the *New York Evening Post*, the Blakelock Fund is gradually developing into a movement to help American artists in general, or such at least as need help during the more strenuous portions of their career. The article from the *Post* follows:

The fund which was started but a few weeks ago to aid Ralph Albert Blakelock, painter, inmate for the last seventeen years of the Middletown Insane Asylum, has taken on the aspect of a movement for subsidizing American art, it was learned recently. Such an outcome of the plans for the relief and home-coming of Blakelock has been so natural, so gradual, that those most closely connected with the incorporation of the fund have been led to this larger factor almost inadvertently. The inception of the feature of permanency in the Blakelock fund

was that part of the statement made at the time of the opening of the first Blakelock exhibition at the Reinhardt Galleries, on April 3, which read as follows:

"When any or all of the income of the Blakelock fund shall no longer be required for the above purposes, said income shall pass to the Artists' Fund Society and the Artists' Aid Society, and the principal shall remain in a permanent fund for the promotion of art in America."

Thus there will be incorporated under the laws of New York, in a few days, the first step to remove this country from the position it has held for so many years as one of the most dilatory nations in the matter of providing for and fostering its own art. England, France, Italy, and Germany for years have done more toward helping their painters than we have ever attempted, the academicians say. Elliott Daingerfield, N. A., said recently that for this reason it was right that the misfortunes of Ralph Blakelock should become the concern of the American public.

"Such things as have happened to Blakelock—the usury, the unjust exploitation—could not have taken

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The road sign shall be simple, distinct, exclusive in design and cost not to exceed \$25.00, complete ready for erecting. It shall be of metal or concrete and shall provide space for placing characters, letters and figures for giving the direction and distance to objective points. It shall be not to exceed seven feet in height after erecting in place.

The design selected is to become the property of the Commission. All other designs submitted will be returned, if so requested.

STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION,

By Wm. W. Marr,

Chief State Highway Engineer.

place in any large country of Europe. Even in Russia, popularly considered two hundred years behind us in civilization, when a man shows himself a genius, he and his family are pensioned. There has not been a time in many years when the American attitude toward American art has been brought home to us at such cost. There is not one among us but who wants to see Ralph Blakelock given comforts; but we must not now be so narrow as to be satisfied with a small bridge over this one difficulty. There will be painters and painters after Blakelock, who have lost their eyesight, who have lost their master arm. For them this matter ought to be settled once for all. And not in the way of the past—by doing all we could with small funds available only to see repetition of the exigencies in acute form."

So the fear in the heart of Blakelock that public appreciation of his work might be based upon mere curiosity and sympathy has been turned around so that he may be the means of obtaining for painters the country-wide what Harry W. Watrous, secretary of the National Academy of Design, said recently was their due.

"I believe," said Mr. Watrous, "that we have been struggling along long enough. Here in this country a man works himself to a place of merit. His pictures may sell readily. They may not. He may become incapacitated. The only help for him now is his proportionate share in the limited funds collected by two active societies and one dormant organization here in New York, whose memberships are composed entirely of artists themselves.

"Here they are: First, the Artists' Fund Society, incorporated in 1861, 'an organization of professional artists, established for the purpose of giving aid to members in disablement, sickness, and distress, and assisting families of deceased members.' The Society has about 115 members. The income is the amount of annual dues at \$5 and private subscriptions. The Society has about \$26,000 in its treasury. All officers serve without pay. As the Society reached the limit which could be administered without paid officials, an overflow society was formed—the Artists' Aid Society, which now has about 70 artist members. This society has about \$13,000 at its disposal. Several years ago there was formed another branch, called the Society to Aid Superannuated Artists. This was officered by the presidents of the parent bodies and two or three laymen. On account of insufficient funds this society became inactive."

According to Alexander C. Morgan, president of the oldest body, the Artists' Fund Society, of 25 Broad street, this is all we have in the country to take care of our painters of genius who may, through no faults of their own, find themselves broken and stranded.

"We have laid away in our treasury the sum of \$26,000," said Mr. Morgan. "Today I could take

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\$20,000 and go directly to painters and their families in just as tragical situations as Ralph Blakelock. The pity of it is that with our limited fund we have been able to give only temporary help, the sort of brief hope after which suffering is only more acute. Today, over in Hoboken, is a portrait painter—no, you must not give his name; it is well-known—who has been painting this winter in a little shack with his coat collar turned up and one gas jet burning for heat. This man would not come to us for help. He is proud. I found him on the verge of pneumonia. He had been in Düsseldorf and was trying to get back home to Worcester, Mass. I had a hard time getting that painter to take the \$50 we could spare. He said that one of his paintings was about to be accepted and hung in City Hall; until then he would bear it. Yet this man was one of the greatest portrait painters of his time. He has given the American public the stimulation and reward of his genius.

"And another, a landscape painter, has been stricken with paralysis. We had no place to send him. In the Home for Incurables his sensitiveness and lack of occupation gives him daily agony. And another, a well-known painter, down with appendicitis, who would not accept a cent. We had to help him through his wife with our promise that his name should never become known. Of course, in the midst of them come the young artists, from the smaller cities, with the visions of quick success. It is not our policy to see to it that they are supported so that they can experiment. But for the sake of the future, we owe them a lift over temporary hard places.

"In England, there is even a society to care for the orphan children of painters. And in Italy the height of benevolent idealism is reached in the brotherhood which conceals its identity with cowl and shroud whenever help is given. We are way behind.

"There have been in other years spasmodic periods of agitation for recognition of American art, but the appeal never before has been of widespread interest. We have not fostered the traditions current in the old world. Our government is constituted that sentiment aroused by one regime is destroyed by its successor. In Europe governmental stand upon art matters is made once for all. It is not fair to let this opportunity—when the public the length and breadth of the country is familiar with what has happened to their Blakelock—pass by without urging the swelling of this fund for the sake of other Blakelocks now unknown except to the few."

William Bailey Faxon, treasurer of the Artists' Aid Society, said recently that this matter of a permanent fund was as delicate as it was pressing.

"Do you remember the time when there were so many fine engravings? The public welcomed them. Now the engravers, artists of high degree, are old men without livelihood. The magazines will not

take their work. No one wants their pictures. We have been trying to help one engraver, a master in his time. All we can do is to give temporary assistance. He has given the public the prime of his life, has made some of the finest engravings hung in the old-time parlors of New York. The stride of the public taste has left him behind, an old man. The American public ought to help him. It ought to help his family. You can't take an artist by the hand and lead him away from his aged wife and expect that to be an act of graciousness."

DeWitt Parshall, member of the Board of Control, of the Artists' Fund Society, said that the interest now taken throughout the country in this permanent fund for American art would in turn serve the public by eliminating such a condition as now exists in the matter of spurious paintings.

"The country is filled with spurious Blakelocks," he said. "If the public has done no other thing in coming to this painter's assistance, it has put us in the way of finding out what is genuine. Without a doubt, Ralph Blakelock could pass upon his paintings in short order. Had he not been driven to resort to the methods he employed for selling them there probably never would have arisen such lawless counterfeiting. In the tentative plans for the fund, I understand, provision will be made for expert appraisement and assistance in selling pictures.

"This feature in itself is as much for the public's good as for the painter's. There is now opportunity for a great work to be done. The details of the commercializing of American art, known only to a few, are tragic enough. If the dealers and unsuspecting bargain-hunters in the picture market could have been with me when I found Mrs. Blakelock, up there in the mountains, a two-mile walk from the village, struggling along in a cabin which cost \$4 a month rent, there would have been deep realization undoubtedly. We are helping her all we can. The two societies are sending a moderate amount of money for current expenses.

Edwin H. Blashfield said that such a chance to give the American public an inside light into the practical aspects of American art might not come again in twenty-five years. He believes that this is Ralph Blakelock's contribution to what is hoped will result in a permanent subsidy for our national art. Mr. Blashfield is one of the incorporators of the Blakelock Fund. Other signatures of the incorporators which have been obtained are those of Daniel Chester French, Herbert Adams, William Ordway Partridge, J. Carroll Beckwith, Cass Gilbert, Emerson McMillin, Charles Eliot Warren, Frank Landon Humphreys, George F. Kunzz, John Giraud Agar, Roland Knoedler, Harrison S. Morris, W. H. L. Edwards, Earl Harding, Mrs. Van Rensselaer Adams, J. Alden Weir, Robert W. De Forest and A. Augustus Healy, are ex-official incorporators. The Astor Trust Company will be the holder of the fund, which has started with over \$3,000, the income

from the first Blakelock exhibit and a few private subscriptions.

Boston, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, St. Louis, and Chicago are among the cities who already have asked the New York Committee for the Blakelock Fund for exhibitions. Committees will be formed in these cities. In the meantime, the Committee hopes that Blakelock can be taken from the Middletown Asylum. In two months it hopes to complete arrangements.

Today Ralph Blakelock has received his diploma as associate of the National Academy of Design. He proudly wears the badge of membership. He has gained eight pounds since his trip to New York. He talks of the friends he met, of the tall buildings, and of when he shall see them all again. New brushes and new paints have brought him happiness; likewise new clothes and furnishings. He is painting there today, not knowing that the tragedy of his own misfortunes may be the means of subsidizing American art for the sake of all who come after him.

Statement of the Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., Required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,

of Fine Arts Journal, published monthly at Chicago, Ill., for April 1, 1916.

State of Illinois, County of Cook, ss.—Before me, a notary public in and for the state and county aforesaid, personally appeared F. J. Campbell, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the publisher of the Fine Arts Journal, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to-wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor and business manager are:

Publisher—Frank James Campbell, Chicago, Ill.

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Managing Editor—Frank James Campbell, Chicago, Ill.

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2. That the owners are: (Give names and addresses of individual owners, or, if a corporation, give its name and the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of the total amount of stock)—Frank James Campbell, Chicago, Ill.

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F. J. CAMPBELL,

Publisher.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 20th day of March, 1916.

(Seal.)

WM. BISHOP GREGORY,

Notary Public.

(My commission expires March, 1919.)